

**University of West Georgia**  
**Dept. of Political Science and Planning**  
**AMERICAN GOVERNMENT**  
**POLS 1101-12 and L2T/LXT**

**Semester:** Fall 2009

**Instructor:** Mr. Sheikh T. Drammeh

**Office:** Pafford 115

**Class Location:** TLC 1303

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**Class Hours:** T/TH. 2.00PM-3.15 PM

**Office Hours:** T/TH. 8.00AM-4.00PM (Except class period times). Also by Appointment

**Course Background:**

This introductory course explores the American political system (the structure, the political linkages, the Institutions, and outcomes of American Government). In addition to its introductory function, the course also serves as a base in understanding future American Government courses in particular and Political Science in general.

**Course Design**

In the interest of enhancing understanding of the material, the course is designed to follow five complimentary parts. *Part One: Structure and structural foundation* of the American political system (Democracy, the Constitution, and Federalism). *Part Two Civil Liberties and Civil Rights*. (Protection from government and “equality”) *Part Three-Political Linkage* (Public Opinion and Political Socialization, Interest Groups, Political Parties, Campaign, Nomination and Elections and the Media and Cyberpolitics. *Part Four: Government Institutions* (The Congress, the Presidency, the Bureaucracy, and the Judiciary). *Part Five: Functions of Government* (Public Policy-U. S. Domestic, Economic and U. S. Foreign. We will also explore State and Local Government.

In addition to the text material there will also be discussion of current political events from TV, Internet, radio etc. at the beginning of every class period.

**Teaching aids** in the form VHS/DVD, the Internet, radio, television, court cases, will also be used to help augment understanding of the subject matter.

**Course Outcomes**

At the end of the course students will demonstrate a general knowledge of:

- 1) The basic values of American civic and political culture.
- 2) The constitutional and institutional framework, political, and legal processes of the U.S. and the State of Georgia.
- 3) The interrelationship between American Governmental institutions.
- 4) The basic terminology of political science & U.S. politics.
- 5) American culture, values, and political institutions as compare with those of other types of government.

**Required Text:**

American Government and Politics Today, 2007-2008 Edition. Schmidt Shelley & Bardes. ISBN #978-0-495-00737-1

**Academic Dishonesty**

**“F” grade** will result in the instance of academic honesty. This grade will apply to the student involved or (in case of collaboration) to both student and accomplice(s). Therefore, it is the student’s responsibility not to share their work, exams, and exam grades. **Plagiarism** may result to expulsion from the university. See the students’ handbook for further explanation.

**Class Attendance and Participation**

Attendance and participation is mandatory. Attendance includes **punctuality** and participation includes reading ahead and ready to engage in informed discussion of the day’s topic. In effect, students are expected to engage in **active participation** (read ahead, interact, and contribute). *Students are responsible for materials, discussions, and due date missed as a result of tardiness and absenteeism.* Such includes class discussions other learning materials reviewed not limited to tapes, DVDs, current events newspapers, radio, online and so on).

*More than FIVE absences during the semester will result to a FIVE POINT deduction from overall class grade. A perfect attendance also attracts a THREE POINT addition to overall class grade.*

**Course Den**

This class is supported by Course Den, There will be daily and weekly postings (our main medium of communication outside the classroom), and it is the student’s responsibility to stay current with the class progress both in-class and on Course Den (Online). Grades will also be posted on Course Den

**Examination & Make-ups**

Four exams and a final exam will be instituted throughout the Semester. Exams include material from the text, class discussions, PowerPoint slides and other learning materials reviewed and discussed, not limited to tapes, DVDs, current events newspapers, radio, Internet and so on).

Exams will be in the form of true/false, multiple choices filling-in blanks and matching. Each exam is limited to the covered material in that segment including videos and other learning aids. Preceded by a review session, all exams are non-comprehensive. At least TWO exams will be on **Course Den**.

Students can drop **one exam**, or instructor will automatically drop your lowest graded exam.

**Make-up Exams and Late Assignments**

All (unexcused) make-up exams and late assignments are subject to **30%** deduction after the due date, **50%** deduction after the first week, unacceptable after the second week. Proper documentation is needed for an excuse to be granted; strictly enforced.

## **Learning Disabilities**

If special arrangements are needed in this area please contact me as soon as possible.

## **Housekeeping Notes**

*Respect towards your colleagues and the instructor is expected, therefore:*

- *No iPods, walkmans or other listening devices.*
- *Switch off/vibrate all cellular phones.*
- *No computer usage during class except for the purposes of the class.*
- *No working on other assignments during this class period.*
- *No sideshows; one speaker at a time for both instructor and colleagues.*
- *No packing before the official ending of the class period.*

***Instructor reserves the right to verify and take appropriate action.***

## **Important Dates**

- 09/07/09- Labor Day
- 10/06/09- Last Day to withdraw with a grade of "W"
- 10/15-16/09-Fall Break
- 11/25-27/09-Thanksgiving Break
- 12/01/09-Last Day of Class
- Final Exam (Tuesday, December 8th from 2PM-4PM)

## **SCHEDULE**

8/13/2009. Class overview and syllabus discussion

### ***PART ONE: Structure & Structural Foundation***

Chapter 1. The Democratic Republic

Chapter 2. The Constitution

Chapter 3. Federalism

*Readings (Chapters 1, 2 & 3)*

**EXAM ONE (Chapters 1, 2 & 3)**

### ***PART TWO: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights***

Chapter 4. Civil Liberties

Chapter 5. Civil Rights

*Readings (Chapters 4 & 5)*

**EXAM TWO (Chapters 4 & 5)**

### ***PART THREE: People and Politics (Political Linkage)***

Chapter 6. Public Opinion & Political Socialization

Chapter 7. Interest Groups

Chapter 8. Political Parties

Chapter 9. Campaign, Nominations, and Elections

Chapter 10. The Media and Cyberpolitics

*Readings (Chapters 6,7,8,9 & 10)*

**EXAM THREE (Chapter 6, 7, 8, 9& 10)**

***PART FOUR: Government Institutions***

Chapter 11. Congress

Chapter 12. The Presidency

Chapter 13. The Bureaucracy

Chapter 14. The Courts

*Reading (Chapter, 11, 12, 13, & 14)*

**EXAM FOUR (Chapters 11, 12, 13, & 14)**

***PART FIVE: Governance: Public Policy (What Government Does -Outcomes)***

Chapter 15: Domestic Policy

Chapter 16: Economic Policy

Chapter 17: Foreign Policy

*Readings (Chapters 15, 16, & 17)*

**FINAL EXAM (15, 16, & 17)**

**ASSESSMENT:**

Exam One	20%
Exam Two	20%
Exam Three	20%
Exam Four	20%
Final Exam	20%
State and Local Govt. Assignment	10%
Quizzes and Assignments	<u>10%</u>
	<u>100%</u> **

*\*\*One Exam will be dropped (missed or lowest grade)*

**EXTRA CREDIT**

**Absolutely no extra credit assignments**, however instructor entertains the idea of adding up to ONE point on final grade to the MOST industrious and diligent students to help them get to the next grade level.

*(Instructor reserves the right to make adjustments and changes on syllabus and dates as seen fit.)*

**HAVE A GREAT SEMESTER!**